

WABASH RIVER HERITAGE CORRIDOR COMMISSION

Minutes of the meeting held March 12, 2008

Dogwood Conference Room at the Inn, Turkey Run State Park,
8102 E Park Road, Marshall, Indiana

Voting Members Present:

Adams County - John Friedt
Allen County - Ron Zartman
Carroll County - George Mears
Cass County - Janet Fawley
DNR – Dale Brier
Gibson County - N. Sherrell Marginet
Huntington County - Dave Hacker
Knox County - Shane Cooper
Miami County - Ken Einselen
Parke County - Penny Cox
Posey County - Ralph Weinzapfel
Sullivan County - John J. Gettinger
Vermillion County - James McFall
Vigo County - Keith Ruble (alternate)
Warren County - Margy Deveral

Proxies:

Wells County - Keith Huffman to Dave Hacker

Voting Members Absent w/o Proxy:

Fountain County - Lowell Osborn
Jay County - Faron Parr
Tippecanoe Co. - Norman (Lucky) Neiburger
Wabash County - Michael Beauchamp

Non-Voting Members Present:

DNR - Division of Historic Preservation and
Archeology – Paul Diebold
Department of Transportation - Ray Irvin

Commission and DNR staff Present

Ron James – WHRCC Executive Director
Jewell Baxter - DNR

Guests:

Rory Robinson – National Park Service
Mercedes Brugh – Cass County (alt)
Diann McIntosh - Vermillion County (alt)

Call to Order

John Gettinger called the group to order at 1:15 p.m. with introductions and representation statements.

Review and Approval of the January 9, 2008 Meeting Minutes

George Mears made a motion to approve the 1/9/08 Minutes. Ken Einselen second. Approved.

President's Report (see attached)

John G. started with House Bill 1115. John told the Commission that the Bill made it through the process until it reached the Senate Appropriations Committee where it died. John mentioned that, at Conservation Day, he had made contact with the Chair of the Senate Conservation Committee and she had agreed to push the Bill. Whether she could have gotten the bill away from the Appropriations Committee, to keep it alive, was an open question.

John went on to report on his involvement with a successful Sullivan County application for a Sec. 319 grant to create a water improvement plan for Busseron Creek, a tributary of the Wabash River. Their planning grant is for \$300,000.00.

Executive Director's Report (see attached)

Ron James focused the Commission on his trips to Gibson and Knox counties and his discussions with their Boards of Commissioners, especially on the river road project. John asked for a motion to accept the report. Dave Hacker made the motion to accept the report and Penny Cox seconded the motion.

Finance Report

Dale Brier was introduced as the new designee for the DNR Director. Dale gave a little history on his experience with the Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission.

Dale explained that \$10,758.60 was left to spend by the end of the fiscal year. The fiscal year ends June 30th. The question was asked about how much money was being spent on the Turkey Run retreat. Ron J. explained that the meeting would cost around \$2000.00 leaving about \$8,700.00 to spend. Dale also explained the blackout dates as discussed at the last meeting for purchasing were no longer an issue. John G. stated that they needed to decide how they were going to spend the rest of the money. Ron J. went through the known expenses left for the fiscal year: The retreat would run about \$2000, the National River Rally about \$1800, the river road signs \$2500, bolts/nuts \$200, signposts \$500. That would leave about \$3500 for regular expenses such as uniforms, utilities, storage, telephone, printer supplies, etc. Ron also mentioned a few things on his wish list such as a canopy and a portable table for the educational kiosk at outdoor events. Travel for the meeting in Gibson County in May will be about \$1000. Ralph Weinzapfel made a motion to increase our commitment to the Wabash River Heritage Paddle Fest to \$500 and N. Sherrell Marginet seconded it. The motion carried. John then asked for a motion to allow counties or organizations to spend \$250 for river events. The motion was made by Ralph W. that the Commission would fund the first 6 requests from the counties and then 2 more if funds were still available. Counties could combine their money for a single event, but both would have to apply for the money separately. The motion was 2nd by James McFall and approved by the Commission. Discussion on award creation held. Dale B. explained the travel reimbursement procedure for retreat attendees.

Committees

* **River Road:** Shane Cooper related Ron's success with the Knox County Board of Commissioners. The committee urges all representatives to get with their neighboring county representatives and designate a River Road route to span the entire corridor. The committee has no 'hard and fast' rules but would prefer the route parallel to the river, paved versus unpaved (bike friendly), with good scenic vistas, yet not a major road (which would keep travelers from enjoying those vistas). Ray Irvin said he has designated an INDoT proposed route available for review/adoption and stated he would be available to work with county highway departments on the route. The Commission has 100 River Road signs to be posted at the turn offs from major roads onto the river road. Space has been left at the sign bottom for local blue 'banner' signs with local logo & directional arrows.

* **Water Trail:** 1) Ron J. spoke with PEN Products about the bridge sign delay. Apparently the template for the signs had been lost. PEN has ordered a new one. They promised the production and delivery within 4 weeks. The Commission discussed sign design.

2) The need for a second edition of the WT maps was discussed. The WT committee may need to hold a planning meeting to consider map upgrades (adding amenities), budget for printing or direct to web site. The upgrade of the Banks of the Wabash web page hosting was mentioned. Ron J. spoke about Map 7 (Vigo/Sullivan) being in short supply. Keith Ruble related that he had around 300 of Map 7 at his office. Ron believed this is sufficient for now

3) Ron J. related that upgrades to the larger signage and the refurbishing of existing access signage kiosks will continue this spring. Ron has been unable to reach the access points due to high water.

* **Banks of the Wabash, Inc.:** BOW report was given by Ken E., its president. Ken reports that the February 20th meeting was postponed due to bad weather. A conference call on February 28th was held to handle pressing business. Scholarship funds were made available for members to attend the National River Rally. Ken said that this would be finalized at the upcoming March meeting in Peru. John G. spoke on Bernie Dahl being selected as a national river hero. Professor Dahl will receive his award at the National River Rally.

- * **Legislation:** John G. told how H.B. 1115 passed House Natural Resources committee unanimously and passed the House 98 – 1. Ron J gave some history and explained H.B. 1115 would establish a “Corridor Fund” to be filled with royalties arising from the extraction of minerals under the navigable waterways of the state. The Corridor Fund would be used for projects supporting the Wabash River Heritage Corridor. Dale B. explained the Fund would have received about \$180,000.00 a year. John and Ray I. encouraged each member to call and urge their senators to add the bill’s language to other legislation as the bill did not get out of the Senate committee and is otherwise dead for this session.
- * **Education:** John related that the “Discover the River” program was on the backburner. We have some great material but committee volunteers are needed so as to move the project.

Old Business

- * **Video:** Ken E. spoke on the status of the next video. An invitation has been extended to county historians to brainstorm ideas. Clayton Taylor, the executive producer from WFYI – Indianapolis Public TV who helped with the ‘Wabash Life’ video, has been invited as well. All Commissioners were invited to stay – Dale B. mentioned expenses would be paid by the Corridor for Commissioners.
- * **Signage:** Corridor signs were discussed by Ron James. He spoke about the artwork being too dark for the signs to be read at 60mph. After discussion, the Commission determined to have the gold/brown ring adjusted so that the lettering could be read easier at highway speed.
- * **New Harmony Bridge:** Ron J. recapped the situation raised by Dr. Rice at the previous meeting. Neither Ryan Hoff (DNR-Legislative Counsel) nor Dr. Rice have re-contacted us.
- * **Nature Conservancy:** No contact has been received regarding arranging public meetings for the NC program to assess the entire Wabash River corridor’s biology. Members should keep their eyes and ears open to any meetings scheduled and attend them if possible.
- * **Conservation Reserve Program:** Keith R. spoke on the Nature Conservancy’s promotion of Wabash basin CRP acreage through their hiring a representative through the NRCS. Around \$3 million has been spent in the Terre Haute area with improvement in water quality and river use apparent.
- * **L’Esprit de Oubache:** It is time to create a new, 08-09 edition. Ron J. asked each member send in an article of 250 - 500 words or ideas on any subject relevant to the history, geology, culture, recreation, life or otherwise of interest to the Corridor. The deadline for the articles is the May meeting.

New Business

- * **WRHCC Award:** John G. revisited the idea of creating a unique object as an award to be given by the Corridor. A discussion was held as to some parameters. Mercedes B. will look into creating a paperweight using her art form (etched glass) for the Commission’s version of a river hero award. She’ll report a projected cost for next year’s budget.
- * **Updating County Board of Commissioners:** Ron J. asked each member to arrange a meeting with their county’s Board of Commissioners to discuss helping with different projects. Each meeting would take 15-30 min. of their time. George Mears arranged Carroll County’s for May 19th.
- * **Reflections distribution:** A discussion was held regarding article submissions for the “Reflections” e-newsletter that is emailed to each member. Ray I. suggested that each member both contribute and read this newsletter to get information out to people about their county and the Corridor. The subject of how the newsletter is distributed was discussed. Janet Fawley suggested that the commission invest in an email service with unlimited email for \$15 a month. Dale suggested that some of the information be put into the E-blast from DNR.
- * **Executive Director’s Contract:** John G. spoke about Ron J’s contract as the WRHCC Executive Director. John stated that some of the wording in the contract needed clarification and the board must approve the changes. Dale B. explained that the contract implies that Ron J. has to visit at least 3 counties per month and meet with the county’s commissioners, appointed commission members and

legislators. He explained that the latter “and” needed to be changed to “or” to avoid a reading that would require a near impossibility. Another proposed change arises from out-of-state travel. Dale explained that the Executive Director’s salary was figured with the normal travel expenses included. Expensive, infrequent, out-of-state travel was not included in the fee. Therefore, E.D. out-of-state travel expenses (only) should be reimbursed. Mercedes B. made the motion on these changes to the Executive Director’s contract, Ken E. seconded, the motion carried.

* **Corridor Fund procedures:** John G. spoke of his surprise on his receipt of a Dan McCain email thanking the WRHCC for a \$47,000.00 grant. John was not aware there was anything left in the grant fund. Janet F. pointed out that the Commission only worked on the grant criteria and that it had not made any other decision. Ken E. noted that the Commission did not go back and follow up on the project funding, but that they should. Dale B. explained that there is 5 year follow up on grants. There may be an annual report available with information on grant money. John stated that he and Ron should sit down with Bob Bronson and discuss the role of the Commission during future grant rounds.

* **Calendar:** National River Rally is May 2-5 in Huron, OH; Sol Fest is May 3 & 4 at Fox Island Park in Allen County (no booth fee); De-Trash the Wabash is May 17th in Tippecanoe County; Merom Bluff Chautauqua is June 6-8 in Sullivan County; National Trails Day is June 7th (all events may be registered with the American Hiking Society); The Transportation Festival in Carroll County is June 14 & 15th (A Water Trail access point will be christened and the Trail grand opening celebrated); River Fest in Tippecanoe County is July 12th; Visit Indiana Day at the State Fair will be August 14 (Dave H. moved to pay up to \$250 for a booth, Ken E. 2nd, carried); Wabash River Heritage Paddle Fest in Posey County is August 16th.

May Meeting & Agenda items:

* The next meeting will be in Gibson County on May 14th at 1:00pm., C.D.T. This meeting will be held in the Lincoln Room of the oldest continually-operating restaurant (circa 1825) in Indiana, the Log Inn. Travelers should take State Route 41, to the first light north of I-64, and turn east. Travel approximately one mile east to a ‘T’. The Log Inn is the large white structure with the big parking lot at the intersection of CR 1250 S & CR 200 E.

* For those arriving by 10:00 a.m. C.D.T., Andy Clark, author of a book on the Wabash & Erie Canal, will speak. A box lunch will be available immediately after his presentation.

* The location for the November meeting will be finalized at the May meeting. Senator Weatherwax will be invited to attend in November and the location may depend on his schedule.

* All need to look for the next legislative supporter now that Senator Weatherwax is no longer going to serve.

* All Commission members should be prepared to select a committee; to volunteer for a task assignment; and, to set goals for their efforts.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission
Executive Director's Report – 12/29/07 – 2/26/08 Submitted by Ron James

- ◆ Travel & trouble-shoot MS Office software for Word, Excel & Power Point use; add AVG anti-virus
- ◆ Review Minutes, Agenda, Exec.Dir. Report, Proxy & Public Notice for 1/9/08 Commission meeting
- ◆ Research, write or edit Adams, Carroll & Gibson County articles; finalize & send *Wabash Reflections*
- ◆ Discussions with Dr. D. Rice & Ryan Hoff re: White County Bridge Comm.& New Harmony Toll Bridge
- ◆ Follow HB 1115 Corridor Fund/Royalties legislation; numerous phone follow-ups with WRHCC supporters
- ◆ Phone canvas of representatives to promote meeting attendance, 1/7 & 1/8/08
- ◆ Phone contact with TNC river consultant Mueller re: sources for river miles, access points
- ◆ Travel & attend Commission meeting, Indianapolis, 1/9/08
- ◆ Travel to attend & obtain authorization to represent Izaak Walton League-Ft. Wayne at Conservation Day
- ◆ Travel & attend Conservation Day; obtain HB 1115 support from State Div.-IWLA, TNC & HEC, 1/10/08.
- ◆ Emails with new Carroll County river bank land owner re: next Commission meeting time & location
- ◆ Update River Commissioner list, prepare & send legislative information packets to county volunteers, 1/12/08
- ◆ Phone contact with Rep. Grubb's office re: presentation contents & details
- ◆ Research costs & finalize list of projects for support of statutory Corridor Fund & royalties application
- ◆ Follow-up, prepare & send invitations, revise presentation for House Natural Resource Committee
- ◆ Travel & attend N.R. Committee with Ken E., Steve M., John G., Don & Louise J., Dr. James G., HEC (Bill H.) & TNC-IN (L. Dennis), obtain 11-0 positive vote, 1/16/08
- ◆ Various & sundry administrative work with representatives of DNR, Outdoor Rec. office, et al.
- ◆ Email contacts with citizen college student re: interview & Wabash River status update
- ◆ Receive Marlene Lu article from Keith R., pursue permission for use or fair use
- ◆ Order supplies for WRHCC retreat with Karen H., DNR office supplies purchaser, 1/24/08
- ◆ Field & transmit requests for brochure distribution from I-69's Flat Creek Welcome Center, 1/24/08
- ◆ Travel & present "Sum of the Parts" to Prof. Prokopy's Purdue Forestry & Nat. Res. 'capstone' class, 1/28/08
- ◆ Aid lake leadership program with contact information for Roush Lake, with Dave Hacker
- ◆ Calendar & office organization for February calendar; begin festival calendar research
- ◆ Register for; finalize accommodations, Turkey Run Inn for March Retreat & meeting, 2/6/08
- ◆ Phone contact with Eric S. re: Wabash River website coordination & development, 2/7/08
- ◆ Organize, procure letters in support, prepare and file nomination of Bernie D. for "River Hero" award, travel & obtain postmark for 2/8/08
- ◆ Review & follow-up on Corridor sign color issues with Bill M. of DNR, *Outdoor Indiana*
- ◆ Edit & prepare Retreat Agenda with Rory R.
- ◆ Prepare River Rally registration & travel calendar; send on to Steve M. for finalization & filing, 2/13/08
- ◆ Travel & attend De-Trash the Wabash – Tippecanoe organizational meeting, 2/14/08
- ◆ Email contact with Amanda T. of St. Mary-of-the-Woods College news re: Vigo flooding effects, 2/15/08
- ◆ Follow-up with Steve M. re: River Rally '08 registration and River Network 'partner' dues/status, 2/15/08
- ◆ Arrange, travel & attend meeting in Gibson County with Commissioners Don W. & Sherrell M., 2/19/08
- ◆ Travel & inspect flooding at Patoka & Mt. Carmel access points, Gibson & Wabash (IL) Counties, 2/19/08
- ◆ Travel towards Lafayette for attendance at BOW board, cancelled en route, 2/20/08; efforts to re-schedule
- ◆ Research, edit and email notices re: grant availabilities, goose control, water quality meetings, et al.
- ◆ Written correspondence to S. Krueger at P.E.N. for update on Bridge signs, 2/22/08
- ◆ Travel & attend dedication of donated art by Dale & Faulkner at Wabash Co. Historical Museum, 2/24/08
- ◆ Arrange, travel & attend County Commissioner's meeting, Knox County, with Shane Cooper, 2/25/08
- ◆ Travel & view flooding at GRC Nat'l Park and post signs for Clark's Landing access, Knox County, 2/25/08
- ◆ Edit & Prepare Minutes, Agenda, Proxy & Public Notice for March Commission meeting, 2/26/08
- ◆ Recap activities for Executive Director's Report through 2/26/08



Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission
102 North Third Street, Suite 302
Lafayette IN 47901
765-427-1505
www.IN.gov/WRHCC

The Chair Report

1-9-08	Indianapolis	Commission Meeting
1-10-08	Indianapolis	Conservation Day
1-16-08	Indianapolis	House Hearing
2-5-08	Indianapolis	Senate Ways + Means
2-13-08	Merom	River side project
2-19-08	Indianapolis	Senate Ways + Means
2-20-08	Lafayette	Banks of Wabash - No meeting
2-26-08	Sullivan	Local BOW meeting
2-27-08	Merom	Banks of Wabash <u>phone</u>
3-4-08	Greencastle	Sycamore R.C. + D.
3-4-08	Sullivan	Busseron Watershed
3-6-08	Terre Haute	Discover River
3-8-08	Sullivan	Ag Day State Legislature people



Ren James
Executive Director
erj@wrhcc.IN.gov

John Gettinger
President
jgettinger@msn.com